

PRESS RELEASE

To: Emergency Officials, Broadcast and Social Media, and you, our fellow Texans
What: March 1-7 Severe Weather Awareness Week in Texas
Where: West Central Texas
Contact: Hector Guerrero at 325-944-0526 ext.223
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March 1-7 Severe Weather Awareness Week in Texas

Tornado Drill Encouraged and Two Life Saving Safety Rules

The National Weather Service (NWS) encourages all residents, businesses and schools across West Central Texas to practice their tornado drill Wednesday, March 4th at 10:00 AM. The NWS in San Angelo will transmit a **Routine Weekly Message** through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) at this time. Because of the test format of this message, it may or may not activate certain NOAA Weather Radios.

1) ***Have at least two ways to receive life-saving NWS warnings automatically like NOAA All Hazards Weather Radio and a cell phone app.*** Some communities and TV stations offer timely warnings apps. Be sure to contact your emergency management office or your local TV station to see if this service is available in your area. Or you can go online and search for your favorite warning alert app.

2) ***Have a safety plan ahead of time so you know what to do.*** Please refer to information on the following pages.

Online Safety Toolkit

Whether you're a blogger, reporter or social media superstar, you can help spread the word during Severe Weather Awareness Week. The materials listed below are free to use in print publications, online news stories, youtube, twitter and even Facebook. Help the National Weather Service and FEMA build a Weather-Ready Nation; one that is prepared for severe weather whenever and wherever it occurs.

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/severe.html>

NWS San Angelo Local Severe Weather Awareness Page

You may also use any of the severe weather safety information contained on the following website to help us prepare our fellow citizens for the impacts associated with severe weather.

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/sjt/?n=svrwx_awareness

Please contact Hector Guerrero at 325-944-0526 ext.223 to set up an interview for your newspaper, radio or TV show. Your participation is extremely appreciated.

Hector Guerrero
Warning and Coordination Meteorologist

Steve Lyons
Meteorologist in Charge



Two Safety Rules that Could Save Your Life

Safety rule number 1- *Be sure you can receive warnings from the National Weather Service*

Don't depend on sirens. Have more than one way to receive your warnings like your cell/smart phone or weather radio.

Sirens are used to warn those who are outdoors, and may not be loud enough to awaken you in the middle of the night. NOAA Weather Radio is like a smoke detector that can warn you anytime, both indoors and outdoors. This radio will produce a loud sound when a tornado warning is issued.

Safety rule number 2- *Know what to do*

The safest place to survive violent, killer tornadoes is in an approved underground storm shelter or in an above ground storm shelter.

The next safest place is on the lowest floor of your home, school or business in an interior room like a closet, hallway, or bathroom. Stay low to the ground and cover yourself with blankets, pillows, and/or mattresses.

If a tornado approaches and you live in a mobile home, abandon it for a more substantial shelter. If nothing is available, lie flat in a nearby ditch covering your head and neck.

Tornadic storms can also produce flash flooding. Watch out when you come to a flooded low water crossing. Always Turn Around, Don't Drown!

When severe weather threatens West Central Texas, your National Weather Service closely coordinates with local emergency managers, volunteer fire fighters, law enforcement officials, SKYWARN storm spotters, storm chasers, and the media to help keep you safe. But you can be your best source for protection when you get a warning from the National Weather Service if you are "weather ready."

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your nearest local emergency manager or you can call us the National Weather Service at 325-944-9445.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECEIVING WARNINGS ON YOUR CELL PHONE: 20 SECONDS

SOME COMMUNITIES, UNIVERSITIES, AND PRIVATE COMPANIES CAN TEXT OR E-MAIL LIFE SAVING NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WARNINGS TO YOUR CELL PHONE OR TELEPHONE WHEN YOU NEED IT THE MOST. TO FIND THE PRIVATE COMPANIES THAT OFFER THIS SERVICE, YOU MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING PHRASE OR SOMETHING SIMILAR IN YOUR FAVORITE INTERNET SEARCH ENGINE: "FREE TEXT MESSAGING WEATHER ALERTS." PLEASE CONTACT YOUR UNIVERSITY OR LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE TO SEE IF THEY OFFER THIS SERVICE IN YOUR AREA.

TORNADO ALLEY: 20 SECONDS <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/images/sjt/ttl6-10.pdf>

MORE TORNADOES STRIKE TEXAS THAN ANY OTHER STATE. IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN WARNINGS ARE ISSUED. IF YOU'RE AT HOME, GO TO YOUR STORM SHELTER OR BASEMENT. IF NEITHER IS AVAILABLE, GO TO THE LOWEST FLOOR AND SEEK A WINDOWLESS ROOM IN THE CENTER OF YOUR HOUSE LIKE A BATHROOM OR CLOSET. PROTECT YOUR HEAD WITH A PILLOW. IF YOU LIVE IN A MOBILE HOME, GO OUTSIDE AND LIE DOWN IN A DITCH OR LOW SPOT. COVER YOUR HEAD WITH YOUR ARMS.

FLASH FLOOD SAFETY: 15 SECONDS www.floodsafety.noaa.gov

ALWAYS TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN (R) WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER A FLOODED LOW WATER CROSSING WHETHER ON FOOT OR IN A VEHICLE. MANY PEOPLE DROWN AT NIGHT WHEN IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO SEE A FLOODED LOW WATER CROSSING. FLASH FLOOD RELATED DEATHS ARE THE NUMBER ONE STORM RELATED KILLER IN TEXAS AND ACROSS THE NATION.

LIGHTNING SAFETY: 15 SECONDS www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov

WATCH THE CLOUDS AND BE PREPARED TO TAKE SHELTER BEFORE YOU HEAR THUNDER OR SEE LIGHTNING. IF YOU'RE CAUGHT OUTSIDE IN LIGHTNING, YOUR HOME AND YOUR CAR OFFER A SAFER SHELTER. STAY OUT OF THE BATHTUB, STAY AWAY FROM WINDOWS AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES. IF POSSIBLE, TURN OFF ALL APPLIANCES PRIOR TO THE STORM'S ARRIVAL. DON'T USE A CORDED TELEPHONE DURING A LIGHTNING EVENT UNLESS YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY.

The National Weather Service Office in San Angelo invites your school to participate in our 16th annual

Tornado Drill for Schools

On Wednesday, March 4th at 10:00 A.M.

March 1-7 is **Texas Severe Weather Awareness Week**. Severe weather may strike with only a few minutes of advance warning. Do you have more than one way to receive a warning?

At approximately 10:00 a.m., on Wednesday, March 4th, the National Weather Service in San Angelo encourages all schools to practice their tornado drills. We will transmit a special message about the drill through NOAA All Hazards Radio. Some of your local radio and TV Stations, and emergency management offices may also carry this message.

We will transmit the message for the following counties: **Throckmorton, Haskell, Fisher, Jones, Shackelford, Nolan, Taylor, Callahan, Sterling, Coke, Runnels, Coleman, Brown, Irion, Tom Green, Concho, McCulloch, San Saba, Crockett, Schleicher, Menard, Sutton, Kimble, and Mason counties.**

For more information, please contact Hector Guerrero at hector.guerrero@noaa.gov or Dr. Steve Lyons at steve.lyons@noaa.gov or you can call us at 325-944-9445.

In 2004, a tornado drill was conducted on March 3rd by many schools. Then on the following day, March 4th, a severe line of thunderstorms with tornadoes struck west central Texas and even hit a school and produced substantial damage. This drill proved extremely valuable and prepared many schools for this extreme severe weather event.

TORNADO SAFETY RULES

If at home:

If you have a tornado [safe room](#) or engineered shelter go there immediately.

Go at once to a windowless, interior room; storm cellar; basement; or lowest level of the building.

If there is no basement, go to an inner hallway or a smaller inner room without windows, such as a bathroom or closet.

Get away from the windows.

Get under a piece of sturdy furniture such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.

Use arms to protect your head and neck.

If in a mobile home, get out and find shelter elsewhere.

If at work or school:

Go to the area designated in your tornado plan. This is usually the most interior room, on the lowest floor without windows.

Avoid places with wide-span roofs such as auditoriums, cafeterias, large hallways, or shopping malls.

Get under a piece of sturdy furniture such as a workbench or heavy table or desk and hold on to it.

Get down low with your head against the wall and use your arms to protect head and neck.

If outdoors:

If you are caught outdoors, seek shelter in a basement, shelter or sturdy building.

If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter: Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.

If in a car:

If you encounter flying debris while you are driving, pull over and park. Now you have the following options as a last resort:

Stay in your vehicle with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.

If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car, and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding.

Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances